

**JOHN SMITH'S DECISION TO MAKE A BETTER LIFE IN
D.J. CARUSO'S *I AM NUMBER FOUR* MOVIE (2011):
AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



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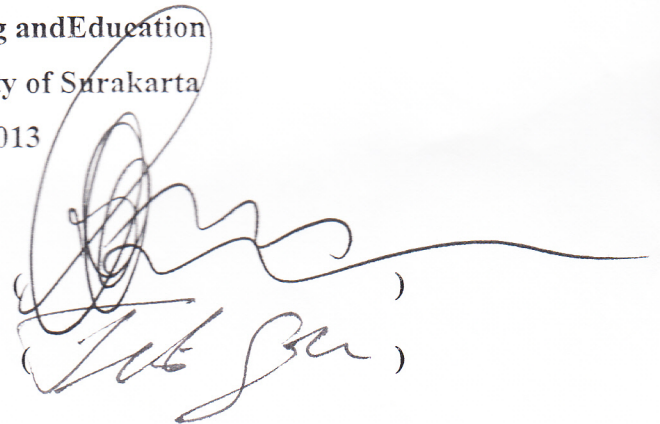
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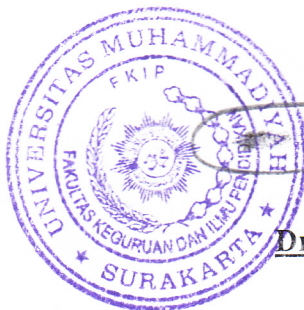
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Abstract: *The major problem of this study is how decision to make a better life in I am Number Four movie based on individual psychological approach. This study analyzes the structural elements in I am Number Four movie and John Smith's decision to make a better life based on individual psychological point of view. Qualitative study is a method which is used to analyze decision to make a better life reflected in John Smith, the object of the study in the movie. A result of the analysis shows the following conclusion: first, John Smith chooses to get better life without move, run, and hide again. He becomes more optimistic and independent for his life. Second, John Smith chooses to surpass his problem through his action. He has the courage to fight the Mogadorians enemy. He searches the other Loriens with Number Six, because they are stronger together.*

Keywords: decision, better life, fight, and togetherness.

A. Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Literature and psychology have close relationship. Both of them depict the human's behavior and their life experience. The psychology learns the human's behavior that is influenced by their life experience. The experience of life can give inspiration for an author to produce a literary work (Wellek and Warren, 1984:91).

The movie as part of literary reflects some realities that happen in the human's life and influence the behavior of the character in the movie. The knowledge of the psychology helps the play director to create characters in plays and movie more real as well as situation and plot.

I am Number Four is a 2011 American teen action movie, one of D.J. Caruso's works. The movie is based on the novel *I am Number Four*, written by Jobie Hughes and James Frey, with an adapted screenplay by Alfred Gough, Miles Millar, and Marti Noxon.

I am Number Four was released in February 18, 2011 describes about the aliens who are hunted the nine Loric on Earth. They are eliminating nine good Loriens in numerical number. Number Three meets his fate in the opening, thus letting the target fall to Number Four (John). Henri wants John to move from Paradise, running from Mogadorians, but John does not want to run again until Henri is dead when fighting with the Mogadorian. So, John decides to stay and fight the Mogadorians. John is helped by Number Six, Sam, and Sarah. Thus, John decides to find the other Loriens with Number Six and Sam, and leaving Sarah. While, this story has causes and effects between one event and the other event.

D.J. Caruso creates John Smith as a major character in this movie. Caruso wants to show that the major character can make decision to his life. Decision is a choice between numbers of possible answers to a question. Decision is the act of coming to a conclusive point in order to solve a problem, choose a best route, or just about any type of choice. It involves the selection

of a course of action from among two or more possible alternatives in order to arrive at a solution for a given problem. Decision's process are identifying and selecting a course of action to solve specific problem.

2. Previous Study

As far as the writer's knowledge, there is no research that *I am Number Four* movie is the object of the research. But there are some researches that used an individual psychological approach.

First, Struggle for love in Anthony Minghella's *Cold Mountain* movie: an Individual Psychological Approach (2010) by Alfi Nurdin Arahman, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. In his research, he focuses on the struggle for love of Inman to Ada Manroe as one of the major character in Anthony Minghella's *Cold Mountain* movie.

Second, Struggle for love of Bella Swan in *Twilight* films: an Individual Psychological Approach (2010) by Supriyadi, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. In his research, the study shows how Bella Swan struggles for love in *Twilight* film viewed from the individual psychological perspective.

Third, The Coping Behavior in Booth Tarkington's *The Magnificent Ambersons*: an Individual Psychological Approach (2006) by Partini, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. In her research, she focused to analyze George Amberson Minafer as one of the major character in *The Magnificent Ambersons* based on the individual approach.

Fourth, Struggle for Achieving Happiness in Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*: an Individual Psychological Approach (2006) by Kartina, University Muhammadiyah of Surakarta. In her research, she focused on the analysis of the major character (Ivanhoe) from the aspect of Individual Psychological Approach.

3. Problem of the Study

In this research, the researcher focuses on the decision to make a better life of John Smith in *I am Number Four* movie directed D.J. Caruso.

4. Limitation of the Study

In order to reach the expected goal, the writer focuses on the analysis of the major character (John Smith) in the *I am Number Four* movie based on the psychological approach.

5. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the research are:

1. To analyze the structural elements of the movie.
2. To analyze the decision of John Smith based on the individual psychological approach by Alfred Adler

6. Benefit of the Study

The benefits expected from the result of this study are follows:

a. Theoretical Benefit

To give some contribution to many people about knowledge or the development of knowledge, particularly studies on *I am Number Four* movie.

b. Practical Benefit

- 1) To enrich the researcher's understanding on *I am Number Four* movie from a psychological approach.
- 2) To be a reference to the other researcher in analyzing this movie particularly the students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

7. Underlying Theory

a. Notion of Individual Psychology

Adler (in Feist, 1985:64) stated that individual psychology insists on the fundamental unity of personality. All apparent dichotomies and multiplicities of life are organized in one self-consistent totality. Adler definite division can be made between mind and body, between conscious and unconscious, or between reason and emotion. All definite division is seen in relation to the final goal of superiority or success. This goal gives direction and unity to the individual.

In individual psychology, actually we learn about the basic principles of it, that each of the principle has the different assumption.

b. Basic Assumption of Individual Psychology

1) Fictional Finalism

Adler (in Ryckman, 1985:98) argues that people create ideas that guide their behavior and concluded that one's various striving can occur without the perception of goals. Adler's concept of fictional finalism is the idea that human behavior is directed toward a future goal of its own making.

2) Inferiority Feeling and Compensation

According to Adler (in Hall, 1985:147), inferiority means feeling weak and unskilled in the face of tasks that need to be completed. It does not mean being inferior to another person in a global sense, although it does imply that we compare our specific abilities with those of others who are older and more experienced.

Adler (in Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992:142) suggests that process of compensate also occur in the psychological sphere; that the people often strive to compensate not only for organ inferiorities but also for subjective feeling of inferiority, those arise from uniquely felt psychological or social disabilities.

3) Striving for Superiority

Each individual is forced by drivers to be superior, powerful and regarded. This is response the feeling of inferiority. By inferiority feeling, person will make some efforts to cover it. Person will strive to cover his or her weakness to be perfect, superior and regarded. There are dynamic force behind the person's activity is the striving for success or superiority (Feist, 1985:68).

4) Style of Life

According to Adler (Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992:146), there are four types of style of life: ruling type, getting type, avoiding type, and socially useful type.

a) The Ruling Type

The ruling type is people who are assertive, aggressive, and active with little, if any social awareness or interest is of the ruling type. Juvenile delinquency and drug addicts are two example of what Adler considered to the ruling type of person.

b) The Getting Type

The getting type as the name suggests people with this life style attitude relate to the outside world in a parasitic manner, "learning" on others to satisfy most of their needs.

c) The Avoiding Type

The avoiding type is people with this predisposition have neither sufficient social interest nor activity to solve their own problem.

d) The Socially Useful Type

This type of person is the epitome of the maturity in Adler's system. Such a person embodies both a high degree of social interest and a high level of activity.

5) Social Interest

Adler (in Ryckman, 1985:96) defines “social interest is as a striving for a form of community which must be thought of as everlasting, as it could be thought of if mankind had reached the goal of perfection”.

6) Creative Power

Creative power means the influences of heredity of any environment toward a person in overcoming the problem of life. Each person is empowered with the freedom to create his/her own life style (Adler in Hjelle, 1992:150). Ultimately, people are solely responsible for who they are and how they behave. This creative of life is responsible for person’s life goal, determines the method of striving for the goal, and contributes to the development of social interest.

B. Research Method

In analyzing John Smith’s decision to make a better life, the writer uses *I am Number Four* movie directed by D.J. Caruso in 2011 as the object of the study. The primary data sources consist of movie itself and data collected from the movie. The secondary data sources are script the movie and other references which are related to the study.

The writer uses some steps of collecting data in this research, those are watching and learning to the movie several times, reading the movie script, determining the character that will be analyzed, taking note of important part in both primary and secondary data. In this research, the technique of the data analysis is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the movie and Alfred Adler’s theory of psychological approach.

C. Research Finding and Discussion

Based on the psychological analysis, it is evident in this movie that D.J. Carusso illustrates the close relationship between literature and psychology by presenting a psychological phenomenon in which an individual is deciding to solve the problem that he gets. The type of psychology of literature, reflected in this movie can be classified into the psychology of characters.

1. Fictional Finalism

Individual psychological analysis shows that the major character, John Smith strives for his life. His strive for his life is the fiction finalism of John Smith. He always keeps moving from one place to another to search a pleasant place. He wants to have many friend and memories with his friend, but those are impossible. He gets new identity as John Smith, previously Daniel. He must be invisible, so that people will not know the real identity of John. He stays at Paradise with his guardian, Henri. John does not run again, because he meets with Sarah as his girlfriend and Sam as his best friend. In order to make it come true, he decides to stay and fight the Mogadorians. Although Henri is dead when fighting with Mogs, John must have spirit to find the other Loriens as himself.

Henri: I can't get through the firewall. We have to go there and take it down ourselves.

Mogs see this, just a matter of time. Pack your stuff. We're leaving.

John: I'm not going.

Henri: I'm sorry, what did you say?

John: I'm not going,

Henri: Ok. If you want to pick the next place, that's fine...

John: It's not my fight and it never was!

I can't even remember a world before this one.

Henri: Wait, wait.... Is this because of a girl?

Go upstairs and get your stuff.

(Script 571-596, IANF – 01:00:32)

2. Inferiority Feeling and Compensation

John Smith feels inferior because he is just a Loric child who still needs a guardian, Henri, to save his life from the Mogadorians. Henri

treats John, so John does not feel free like the other teenagers. After he gets his power (Legacies), he tries to control his power and Henri helps John to calm himself. He practices his power for the first time when he and Sarah got attack from Mark and his friends in Carnival. John is very panic and afraid if Sarah gets hurt, so he practices his power, Lumen and Telekinesis to Mark's friends. Other inferiority of John is when key of the car was lost and the Mog runs to him. John is very panic, but there is Henri to calm him. So, John uses his power to start the car. After they are running from Mogs, John realized that Henri gets hurt. He feels sad when Henri is dead. After all, his inferiority does not make him give up in many ways.

John: I can't do this without you.
Henri: Yes, you can. Yes you can.
You have no idea what you're capable of.
John: Henri.

(Script 698-702, IANF – 01-13:09)

3. Striving for Superiority

Striving for superiority happens when John fails to save Henri. John tries to fight the Mogs and to search the other Loric after Henri is dead. When John is fighting with Mogs, Six comes to help John. But Six is caught by the Mog's monster, John tries to save her with his power, Lumen (heat and light produced from his hands). The other striving for superiority of John is when Sam starts to protest with Mark's act, John wants to help him, but he controls his emotion because many people are watching them and when Sam is disturbed by Mark by throwing a ball to Sam's head, John throws the ball back to Mark and hit Mark's friend very strongly.

4. Style of Life

John Smith's style of life represents his personality as a Loric child who lives in society. His style of life is getting type. All of his styles of life above help him to live and exist in society by Henri, Six, Sam, and Sarah.

Especially to get a better life, he must face complicated situation and condition.

5. Social Interest

The social interest of John is not sociable. He came from planet Lorien. He moved to Earth because his planet was destroyed by Mogadorians. He can associate with other humans around him. He gets some friends in Florida. After he gets the third scar, Henri as his guardian decides to move to Paradise, Ohio. The third scar is a signal if Number Three is dead. Mogadorians do not stop hunting the Lorics on Earth. John is the next, because he is Number Four. John is very sad because he must run and move from one place to another, and adapt with the social surroundings. He is considered as a mysterious person in Paradise, because he must hide his identity. He joins with Sam, because Sam is an excommunicate person. After he meets with Sarah, he feels comfort and falls in love with her. Sarah introduces John to her family. He feels happy because he never gets warm reception.

6. Creative Power

Creative power of John Smith is shown when John looks Sarah's house with a different view. He never gets a family that can talk with in dinner and he always moves from one place to another. So, he does not have a house to stay. John is very angry when Henri wants to move again. He does not want to move, because he found his beloved girl, Sarah. He wants to protect Sarah and gets a new friend, Sam. He wants to help Sam to find his father.

D. CONCLUSSION

Based on the previous analysis, the study comes to the following conclusion.

Firstly, based on the structural analysis, it can be concluded that in this movie, D.J. Carusso conveys a message that “a Strength needs togetherness”. In order to elaborate the message he creates the characters. John Smith as the important character represents of theme of the movie. D.J. Carusso puts setting of place *I am Number Four* movie in Pittsburgh, Florida, and Paradise (Ohio), USA, and setting of times generally in 21st century 2011. D.J Carusso uses traditional plot. The chronologies of the plot begin with the beginning, which describes about the aliens that are hunting the nine Loric on Earth. They are eliminating nine good Loric in numerical number. Number Three meets his fate in the opening, thus letting the target fall to the major character, Number Four (John Smith). The middle consists of some conflicts that lead the story into the highest tension because John Smith stays to fight the enemy. He does not run again. The ending is the solution of John Smith and his friends, Number Six to find the other Loric to gather the strength.

The research paper has contribution to pedagogy. The contribution is conditioning the student's decision. Students have roles to choose a decision. Student's decision will influence their studies. Choosing match friends is one of hard individual decision because it will disturb their social problem too. If there are problems surroundings, students must search the great decision to solve the problem. Students are helped by teacher in the school to make a decision so that they can develop their thought to be good students. However, some student needs help from parent and other side like guiding and counseling. Every decision chosen by students will influence their personality in the future.

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